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Planning and Project Implementation Update



April 2002

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### ABOUT THIS UPDATE

The purpose of the Chippewa Quarterly is to provide a summary of environmental analyses on the Chippewa National Forest. Issued quarterly, this is intended to complement other public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers. Legal notices will continue to be published in the following local newspapers: Bemidji's *The Pioneer* for Forest Supervisor decisions; and Blackduck's *American*, *Cass Lake Times*, *Western Itasca Review*, and Walker's *The Pilot-Independent* for District Ranger decisions.

For further information, to provide comments, or for copies of available documents, contact the Supervisor's Office for forest-wide projects or the appropriate NEPA Coordinator for District projects.

Projects are classified into one of three categories:

#### **Environmental Analyses in Progress**

This category includes projects in which public input is being or is about to be solicited. It also includes those projects that are currently under study or analysis. Environmental analyses include Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments (EA), and Categorical Exclusions (CE).

#### **Completed Decision Documents**

These are projects that have culminated in the preparation of completed environmental analyses and decision documents since the last issue. These decision documents include Records of Decision (ROD), Decision Notices (DN), and Decision Memos (DM). Findings of No Significant Impacts will be included in this category, also.

#### **Proposals withdrawn or deferred**

Some projects are initiated and published in this Quarterly but may be withdrawn or deferred for various reasons. These projects may or may not be picked up for completion at a later date. Project summaries include reasons for discontinuing the project.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Appeal Period** - The 45-day period after publication of a decision in which an appeal can be filed.

**Categorical Exclusion (CE)** - A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

**Comment Period** - The time allowed for interested persons to provide comments to a Responsible Official on a proposed action.

**Decision Memo (DM)** - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision to implement an action that has been categorically excluded from documentation.

**Decision Notice (DN)** - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact.

**Environmental Assessment (EA)** - A document that presents issues and concerns important to a project, alternate means of accomplishing a project, and environmental effects of each of those alternatives.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** - This document is required for proposed actions that may have significant effects on the human environment. The contents are similar to an environmental assessment, and it includes some additional sections.

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)** - A document prepared by a federal agency presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

**NEPA** - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The procedural guide for the decision making process for site-specific projects.

**Proposed Action** - A proposal made by the Forest Service to authorize, recommend, or implement an action on National Forest System lands to meet a specific purpose and need which is subject to public notice comment provisions.

**Scoping** - Includes internal and public involvement to determine the range of issues to be addressed. Scoping aids in the development of alternatives for a proposed action.

**Significance** - As used in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires consideration of both context and intensity.

### Anticipated "Walk-in" Business

Requests from the public occasionally necessitate analyses be completed with a short turn-around. This may mean that decisions are made without prior announcement in this Update. As these projects come up for consideration however, they will continue to be announced by legal notices in newspapers. Examples of walk-in requests include special use roads and utility rights-of-way. Scoping efforts for these requests will be conducted as applicable.

### Forest Policy on Distributing Documents

Draft and Final Environmental Assessments and Decision Notices/FONSI's and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision are routinely mailed to individuals who submit written comments to any projects. We do not routinely distribute biological assessments or biological evaluations with the previously listed documents. If you wish to receive biological evaluations or biological assessments for NEPA projects, please contact the district and/or Supervisor's Office NEPA Coordinators.

### Privacy on Comments Received

Comments received in response to solicitation as part of the NEPA process, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on a proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within stated number of days.

## SCHEDULE OF NEPA PROPOSED ACTIONS

**Blackduck Ranger District**  
**417 Forestry Drive**  
**Blackduck, MN 56630**  
**(218) 835-4291 TTY: (218) 835-4189**

**FREDRICK PICK, District Ranger**  
**NEPA Coordinator: Leo Johnson (ljohnson@fs.fed.us)**

### *Environmental Analyses in Progress*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
B96	County Road 29 Reconstruction	T149N, R27W & R28W	Itasca County has requested an easement to reconstruct Co Rd 29 from Dora Lake to Alvwood, MN	Conducted in 1999	EA out for comment in May, 2002	July, 2002	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B97	Livestock Special Use permit	T149N, R29W sec 30	Re-issue two special use permits to use National Forest Land as livestock area	Public scoping conducted November 2000	Analysis in progress	April, 2002	Chantel Cook (218) 335-8662
B104	Hwy 2 Fiber Optic Cable	South of Hwy 2 from Cass Lake to Ball Club	Paul Bunyan Telephone has requested to install fiber optic cable across NF land in ROW south of HWY 2	Conducted in November/December 2000	Analysis in progress	April 2002	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117
B106	Sandplain Vegetation Management	T145 28, 29,30 T146 29, 30	Developing Proposal to include thinning and Prescribed burning	Conducted in December 2001	Analysis in progress	July 2002	Mark VanTassel (218) 835-3112
B107	Permanent Forest Opening Maintenance	Districtwide	Maintain openings for wildlife in a grass/forb condition	Letter sent 2/28/2002	Begin in May 2002	July 2002	Bart Tobin (218) 835-3118
B108	Cass Lake Vegetation Management	T145N,R30,31W; T146N,R30,31W, T147N,R31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Norway Beach parking lot, Norway Beach Work Center Building, Bike Trail, and Star Island toilet	Letter sent 2/21/2002	Begun in March 2002	September 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B109	Carlson SU Road Permit	T147N,R31W, Sec. 32	Easement for a private road	Scope in April 2002	Has not begun	August, 2002	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117
B110	County Road 22 Reconstruction & Easement	T148N,R31W	Reconstruct and pave the county road	Conducted in December 2002	Begun in February 2002	August, 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B111	Bowstring River Bridge Replacement	T149N,R27W, Sec. 23 and 26	Easement (about 400 feet by 66 feet) and replace a narrow bridge	Scope in April 2002	Has not begun	September, 2002	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B112	Turtle River Watershed Assessment	T146N,R29,30,31W, T147N,R29,30,31W, T148N,R30,31W, T149N,R30,31W	Watershed assessment	Not applicable.	Begun in April 2002	Not applicable. Completion expected in September, 2002	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B91	Winnie Watershed North Vegetation Management EA	T146N/R29W, T147N/R26W,R28W Northwest of Lake Winnie	Harvest and regenerate and thin approx 1100 acres of aspen, hardwoods and upland conifers.	Completed.	Decision withdrawn on 4/3/2002. Additional analysis being done for goshawk.	Early July, 2002	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116

### *Completed Decision Documents*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
B105	FR 3629 Buried Telephone Cable	T46N,R31W, sec 6	Proposal to install ¼ mile of buried telephone cable along west side of FR 3629	Decision Memo signed March 21, 2002	Non-appealable		Lisa Arbucci (218)835-3117

*Decisions Appealed or Withdrawn*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
B91	Winnie Watershed North Vegetation Management EA	T146N/R29W, T147N/R26W, R28W Northwest of Lake Winnie	Harvest and regenerate and thin approx 1100 acres of aspen, hardwoods and upland conifers	Decision Notice signed 1/10/2002		Decision withdrawn on 4/3/2002. See above.	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116

**Walker Ranger District**  
**201 Minnesota Ave. East**  
**Walker, MN 56484**  
**(218) 547-1044 Fax: (218) 547-3260**

**THOMAS G. SOMRAK, District Ranger**  
**NEPA Coordinator: Chris Brunner ([cbrunner@fs.fed.us](mailto:cbrunner@fs.fed.us))**

*Environmental Analyses in Progress*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
W51	CSAH 13	T142N R30W Sections 15, 20 & 32	Road reconstruction from T.H. 200 to CSAH 72. Known as the Onigum Road, approximately 6 – 7 miles would be reconstructed.	Completed in October 2000	Completed	Late April 2002	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W65	Lake Country Power	T144N R29W Sec 1; T145N R28W Sec 30-31	Replacement of overhead and underground lines.	Completed in January 2002	Completed	April 2002	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W44	Rice Lake Vegetation Management	T141N R25W and R26W	Prescribed burning, timber harvest, and road obliteration.	Completed in November 2001	In progress	June 2002	Cindy Miller (218) 547-1044
W58	Woodtick Trail (FR2701) Relocation	T141N R30W S1/2 Section 30	Realign approximately 3500 feet of the Woodtick Trail (Forest Road 2107). Includes restoration of the wetland.	Completed in October 2000	In progress	May 2002	Bill Yourd (218) 335-8672
W64	Maboy Vegetation Management	T141-143N, R26-29	Prescribed burning, timber harvest, road obliteration, and snowmobile trail reroutes.	Begin in May, 2002		October 2002	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044
W66	Bena Crossover, (Enbridge Energy Pipeline)	T145 R28W Sec 34	Replacement of pipe along 0.4 miles of National Forest System Land.	Ongoing	In progress	July 2002	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W67	Upland Openings Maintenance	Southern portion of the District	Encroaching woody species would be removed by rotary-axe cutting methods.	Begin in April, 2002	In progress	May 2002	Chris Collins (218) 547-1044

*Completed Decision Documents*

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
C53	Lakehead Pipeline	T145N R28 – 31W	Construct a new 36" X 20-mile long pipeline along existing corridor from Cass Lake to Bena. 11.5 miles are on National Forest System Lands.	Decision Notice signed December 2001.	February 19, 2002. Not appealed.		Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W63	Brush Lake Impoundment Reconstruction	T144N R30W Sec 3	Reconstruction of dilapidated water control structure	January 9, 2002	Non-appealable		Johan Casson (218) 547-1044

**Deer River/Marcell Ranger District**  
**1037 Division Street**  
**Deer River, MN 56636**  
**(218) 246-2123 TTY: (218) 246-9743**

**Marcell Office**  
**49554 State Hwy 38**  
**Marcell, MN 56657**  
**(218) 832-3161**

**WADE SPANG, District Ranger**  
**NEPA Coordinator: Michael Jiménez ([mjimenez@fs.fed.us](mailto:mjimenez@fs.fed.us))**

***Environmental Analyses in Progress***

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Scoping Status</b>	<b>Analysis Status</b>	<b>Expected Decision Date</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
D29	Private Road Access to Bowstring Lake Property	T147N, R26W, Section 2, SWSW and Section 11, NWNW.	Applicant has requested special use permit for a ¾ mile road crossing NF lands to access private land	Scoping conducted in April 2001	Analysis began in May 2001	June 2002.	David Sorenson (218) 246-2123
D43	West Suomi Bridge Construction and Trail Location	T57N, R26W, Section 6 SWSE.	Purpose is to look at alternatives for a short snowmobile trail realignment and stream crossing due to beaver.	Scoping began in April 2001	Analysis began in May 2001	June 2002	Patti Hines (218) 246-2123
M54	Marcell Experimental Forest – Relocation and Expansion	T58N, R25W, Section 14	Proposal evaluates the relocation of the Marcell Experimental Forest Administrative Site and considers adding 500 acres of National Forest lands to the Marcell Experimental Forest	Scoping began in August 2001	Analysis in progress	July 2002.	Sandy Verry (218) 326-7108
M52	Alder Road Reconstruction	T58N, R26W, Sections 1, 11, 12, 14, and 23.	Itasca County has requested Forest Service approval to reconstruct this gravel road.	Scoping will begin in June 2002.	Analysis to begin in July 2002.	December 2002.	David Sorenson (218) 246-2123
D45	Cuffe Road Special Use Permit	T148N, R26W, Section 35 SESE.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping will begin in May 2002.	Analysis to begin in June 2002.	June 2002.	Jane Munell (218) 246-2123
D46	Noard Road Special Use Permit	T141N, R25, Section 15.	Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands.	Scoping will begin in May 2002.	Analysis to begin in June 2002.	June 2002.	Jane Munnell (218) 246-2123
D41	Upper Bowstring Intergrated Resource Project (IRP)	Encompasses the Upper Bowstring Watershed including Spring, Jessie, Rice, Caribou, and Turtle Lakes.	Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, wildlife, & watershed management and restoration in the Upper Bowstring Watershed.	Scoping began February 2002.	Analysis to begin in March 2002.	October 2002.	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123
D44	Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance	Various locations throughout Marcell/Deer River Ranger Districts.	Evaluates the renewal of land special use permits near expiration. The majority of these permits involve road uses and are valid for five years.	Ongoing scoping will begin in June 2002.	Analysis will begin in July 2002.	September 2002.	Dave Sorenson (218) 246-2123
M53	Rice Lake Access an Snowmobile Trail Reroute	T60N, R26W, Section 32.	Proposal is to consider a snowmobile trail re-route and trailhead improvement.	Scoping to begin in June 2002.	Analysis to begin in July 2002.	August 2002.	Mike Martin (218) 246-2123
D42	Eagle Nest Road	Road extends from Hwy 46 to South Deer Lake Campground. T147N, R27W, Sections 14, 15, 21, 22, & 28.	Project will look at small realignments, reconstructing bridges and adding bituminous surface to Eagle Nest Road. Project will also encompass the rehabilitation of East and West Seelye Campgrounds adjacent to this road.	Scoping to begin in June 2002.	Analysis to be initiated in August 2002.	October 2002.	Mike Martin (218) 246-2123
M40	Rice River Vegetative, Habitat and Watershed Management and Restoration Projects	T60N, R26W, T59N, R26W, and T58N, R25W.	Evaluates the vegetative management alternatives in a portion of this sub-watershed.	December 27, 2001.	Decision Reversed March 2002. Additional analysis being done.	Early July 2002	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123

***Decisions Appealed or Withdrawn***

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision Approval Date</b>	<b>Appeal Due Date</b>	<b>Appeal Review Date</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
M40	Rice River Vegetative, Habitat and Watershed Management and Restoration Projects	T60N, R26W, T59N, R26W, and T58N, R25W.	Evaluates the vegetative management alternatives in a portion of this sub-watershed.	December 27, 2001.	February 11, 2002.	Decision Reversed March 2002 See above.	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123

***Completed Decision Documents***

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision Approval Date</b>	<b>Appeal Due Date</b>	<b>Appeal Review Date</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
D31	Eastside Wet Meadow Community Restoration and Maintenance	Scattered locations throughout Deer River and Marcell Ranger Districts.	Proposal is to continue and expand on prescribed fire treatments to restore and perpetuate wetland sedge meadow communities.	January 9, 2002.	February 25, 2002. No Appeals		Michael Jiménez (218) 246-2123

## Forest Plan Revision UPDATE

The Chippewa and Superior National Forests continue to work together to revise both Forest Plans. During the month of March, informational meetings were held to share plan revision information with the public. Seven public open houses held in various towns and cities were attended by a total of almost 200 individuals representing a broad range of interests. An overview of the Forest Plan Revision process and maps of the preliminary alternatives were presented. The information presented at the open house meetings is available at the Chippewa National Forest website listed below. Additional public meetings are planned this summer after the range of alternatives is finalized.

The planning team is preparing analysis for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and will focus on the following tasks during the coming months:

- Analyzing the results of computer modeling of vegetation management and condition, by alternative.
- Convening a panel of plant and animal species experts during the last week of April. Their task is to help provide information to the planning team to assure that the alternatives provide for sustained viability of species.
- Conducting additional analysis to help develop a social assessment and to provide information for the social impact analysis that will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- Collecting data to help analyze the economic effects of alternatives, including use of IMPLAN model.
- The preliminary alternatives will continue to be adjusted and refined based on analysis from the above items and well as factoring in
  - transportation planning.
  - recreation and scenery management.
  - water, riparian and aquatic management.
  - protection of soils
  - fire management

One environmental impact statement will be prepared, and two revised Forest Plans will be developed—one for each National Forest. The draft Environmental Impact Statement and draft Proposed Plans are expected to be released for formal public review and comment by fall of 2002. The final Environmental Impact Statement and final plans will be completed based on the response to the draft EIS and draft plans. The final Revised Forest Plans will guide management of the Chippewa and Superior National Forests for 10 to 15 years following their approval.

*For further information please see the web site: [www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa)*

Questions concerning Revision can be directed to Duane Lula, Forest Planner (218) 626-4383 or [dlula@fs.fed.us](mailto:dlula@fs.fed.us). To be added to the Forest Plan Revision mailing list, or to request revision documents not available on the internet, please contact: Tonya Struecker (218) 335-8681 or [tstruecker@fs.fed.us](mailto:tstruecker@fs.fed.us).

Large print available upon request.

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Individuals and organizations with legal, economic, or preservation interests may request to participate in consultation on the project's effects on historic properties.



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